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NATIONAL FOREST VACATIONS

NICOLET NATIONAL FOREST, WISCONSIN

SEP 29 1938 ☆

U. S. Department of Agriculture

A radio talk by Elizabeth S. Pitt, United States Forest Service, broadcast August 24, 1938, in the Department of Agriculture period, National Farm and Home Hour, by 90 stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company.

WALLACE KADDERLY:

Well, if you have hiking shoes on today we'll take a hike. An imaginary hike to be sure---but there's nothing imaginary about our destination--as we pick up the National Forest Vacation Trail again. You remember we started it a few weeks ago with Elizabeth Pitt of the United States Forest Service---when she gave us a glimpse of the Nantahala National Forest in North Carolina. Then we hiked north to the White Mountain National Forest in New Hampshire. Maybe you haven't had your vacation yet. Maybe you're not going to have a vacation (but I hope you do). Anyway, if you are like me, you enjoy an imaginary one once in a while. Now where are we going today, Betsy?

ELIZABETH PITTS:

Out to the Land of the Lakes in Northern Wisconsin, Wallace, and I think we'll need more than just hiking shoes. It will probably take seven-league boots because that is Paul Bunyan's country--Paul Bunyan, the mythical lumberjack who did things in a big way and had such a remarkable big blue ox. Out there we are going to stop at the Nicolet National Forest just north of Green Bay and south of Lake Superior. This National Forest is an area of 985,000 acres abounding in scenic beauty, Indian lore, and fascinating historical background. The French were the first white men to explore this country. They were anxious to find the Northwest Passage, and the first known white man to visit the area now known as Wisconsin was Jean Nicolet. It is from this explorer, who came in 1634, that the Nicolet National Forest gets its name. Samuel Champlain, governor of New France, sent Nicolet to investigate rumors of a distant race called the "People of the Sea," who it was thought were probably Asiatics. Nicolet is believed to have landed at a point in Green Bay, and he found the mysterious "People of the Sea" to be merely the Winnebago Indians.

In time, many traders came after the rich furs of the Northwest, and their adventures with the red men have furnished material for some of the most exciting stories in American fiction.

After the wealth from the fur trade began to decline early in the nineteenth century, there came the onslaught on timber. The first logging in Wisconsin was probably on lands now within the Nicolet National Forest.

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In 1835 a sawmill began operations at Nennah and floated logs down the Wolf River. As the new Nation grew in population and developed its vast domain, these logging operations increased until the peak was reached in 1899. Settlers followed the loggers but the land proved unfit for agriculture, and today much of it has found its way into the Nicolet National Forest and its two sister national forests, the Ottawa and the Cewamegon because growing forest crops has proved to be the most profitable use to which this land can be put.

In our National Forests in the Lake States area, the biggest job of the Forest Service is to rehabilitate and to restore to production many thousands of acres of forest land that has suffered from past abuse. Last year more than 70,000,000 trees were planted on Lake States National Forests--that's nearly half of all the trees planted on national-forest lands last year.

One of the largest of the thirty Federal tree nurseries is maintained on the Nicolet National Forest. This is the Hugo Sauer Nursery, and here some 12,000,000 tiny trees are grown each year for planting in the National Forests. They are mostly red pine, jack pine and white pine and a great many white spruces.

People who like to watch animals in their natural habitat, find the Nicolet National Forest an excellent place to enjoy this fascinating pastime. In that forest, there's quite a menagerie: some 29,000 deer, 15,000 snowshoe rabbits, 21,000 prairie chickens, 10,000 ducks, and 141,000 ruffed grouse. And there are many fur bearers, too--of a kind that have supplied rick apparel for women from the days of Indian princesses down to present-day movie queens. These are beaver, red fox, mink, muskrat, and otter. The lumbering bear, the animal which seems to have first place in the affections of the American public, finds the Nicolet National Forest a very satisfactory home, and there are now about 700 bear in the area.

As in all National Forests, there is no charge for using the fifteen forest campgrounds on the Nicolet. However, there are a few simple regulations to keep the camping areas clean and to avoid the damage of setting the forest on fire. You might start a forest fire, and the Northern Wisconsin woods have already suffered enough from forest fires.

If you would like to have a map and general information about the Nicolet National Forest in Northern Wisconsin, write to the United States Forest Service, Washington, D. C. Just send a postcard to the United States Forest Service, Washington, D. C., and ask for information about the Nicolet National Forest.

#### KADDERLY:

Elizabeth Pitt of the United States Forest Service, has told us about the Nicolet National Forest in Northern Wisconsin. On August 31 (not very far off, just a week) --on August 31, she will be back to take us westward along the National Forest Vacation Trail to the Rocky Mountains--and the Pike National Forest in Colorado.